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fine black of its silken lashes, or one of her rosy cheeks, were moved ever so little from its centre of gravity—if her lovely mouth ended abruptly with a straight line on one side, while on the other it lost itself in the most graceful curve—what would become of the form of the whole of her perfect face, although every part single retained its full beauty? Must not everything, then, that heightens and strengthens this expression of balance, enhance the beauty of person; and since the form of beauty in the invisible is no other than that in the visible, must not the latter be perfected, when increased by the reflection of the former? A gentle power dwells in both, and appears in the exterior, if no overweight, be it through weakness on one side or impetuosity of passion on the other, annihilates the equilibrium. Any indication of weakness in the withering of the limbs of a healthy body, as in the features of the face, impairs beauty, because it bespeaks the weakness of a human proclivity; and every violent passion has the same injurious effect, by marking the face with the want of power or the want of a counterbalance. For the febrile intensity of passion, far from being strength, can arise only from weakness, namely: from the weakness of a counterbalance, which alone could keep passion within the golden bounds of a harmonious desire. Hence, Reason alone is strong, for she alone can watch over the preservation of this balance, by supporting the weak side and subduing the strong one. Passion has the mobility and inconstancy of whim, while reason, preserving the balance of desires, gives firmness. Passion rises and subsides, reason is always the same."

Here Diotima paused, looking down in seeming abstraction.

"Do you not think, Socrates," she continued, after a while, "that the beautiful Achilles even was less lovely when, enraged at Agamemnon, he laid his hand upon his sword? But the divine Homer does not suffer his favorite to sink. The wise Athene seizes his arm, speaks words of moderation to him, and I see the whole splendor of his beauty return.

"But I must confine myself to my own sex, for with female beauty I ought to be most conversant. Does not the charm of love impart a grace, without which beauty is not beautiful—a grace with which the celestial Aphrodite is accompanied when she resolves to be sure of her conquest? Does it not invest with a

beauty which wholly originates within? And its most potent spell, does it not consist in the mild chasteness which balances sweet desire? Look there at the Medusa's head in the hand of the victorious Perseus, as delineated in yonder painting of Polygnotus. Is it not the most finished beauty? and yet you shrink from it. You behold the shocking serpent hair destroying a beauty which would meet you with the loveliest impression when accompanied by virtuous grace.

"Thus the beauty of the soul admixes with that of the person, and both are the offspring of one common *Model of Beauty*."

Here Diotima became silent and relapsed into her former ecstasy, which caused her to forget that I sat before her, motionless and in silence, for I was lost in meditation at the sublime truths which I had heard.

"Then," interrupted Theodata, "then, according to the opinion of your divine Diotima, mind and modesty, soul and virtue, were the surest and best cosmetics for us Grecian ladies. How can you—"

At this moment the door opened, and the rich Agathon rushed into the room. Socrates stole away silently, without being missed, and history gives us no further record of the fate of the beautiful Theodata.

### THE PREACHER'S VASE OF FLOWERS.

By Mrs. Julia Ward Howe.

In the pulpit the preacher rises  
With the flowers beside his hand.  
Now those costly gathered blossoms  
Are the worship of the land.

Like the Poets, they hand the legends  
Of the golden summer down,  
While their brothers of earth work onward  
In the wintry chain and frown.

Lo! she is here beside thee,  
The floweret of thine heart;  
She is here whom most thou seekest  
With thy compassionate art.

It is not yon haughty Lily,  
That shows neither blight nor stain;  
It is not yon Rose of scarlet,  
Drenched with the passionate rain.

It is not the faithful Ivy,  
That dreams of the ruin still;  
Nor the little crumpled Violet,  
Brought sightward against its will.

It is that bruised blossom,  
With the deadly blight and stain  
It is that once trampled blossom  
That never shall rise again.

### VENICE.

By Madame Octavia Le Vert.

"—throned on her hundred isles—  
She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from Ocean,  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers."



LONG the coast of northeastern Italy, where the waves of the Adriatic gaily meet the waters of the Brenta, the Adige, and the Po, a long sand-bank tells of their union, forming a bulwark against the fierce storms which often sweep over this turbulent sea. It is called the Lido, and is pierced by six canals, through which vessels enter the port of Venice. These passways are strongly fortified, and obstructions placed within them can readily hinder the entrance of an enemy's ship.

Fifteen hundred years ago, between the Lido and the mainland, there were eighty small islands, formed by the *debris* brought down from the Alps by these three rivers. Here the terror-stricken Veneti, driven from their homes by the inroads of the Huns, led on by the fearful Attila, sought a refuge. Like the sea-bird driven from the land, they hid among the sedges and rushes of these islets, scarcely above the surface of the water.

It was the boast of old Rome that its people imbibed strength and vigor from the wolf's milk, which nourished its first founders. Hence, we may truly say, the Venetians derived their energy and indomitable industry from the unceasing necessity of action, of toil and struggle. A kind Providence seemed to have given them a genius and adaptativeness to their condition, unprecedented in the annals of the world. Resolved to build a great city, they drove piles into the deep marsh, for it could not be called ground. Within these circles they threw stones and great rocks, brought from the main land by infinite labor, and upon these they built great houses, after a firm foundation was obtained. The space between the islands they cleared away, suffering the waves of the Adriatic to flow freely through them, forming streets, like canals. Thus, the Gondola becomes as necessary to Venice as sunlight to the flowers, and quite as much a part and portion of its glory as are its splendid palaces, glittering domes, and lofty towers.

In a few centuries the Venetians had